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Draft report

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Addendum

High-level segment: progress achieved and challenges in implementing the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem

A. Opening of the high-level segment

1. The high-level segment of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs was held on 13 and 14 March 2014. The high-level segment was opened by the Chair of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission. A total of [...] States participated in the high-level segment.

2. The theme for the general debate of the high-level segment was "Progress achieved and challenges in implementing the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem".

3. The themes for the round-table discussions of the high-level segment were as follows:

(a) Demand reduction: reducing drug abuse and dependence through a comprehensive approach;

(b) Supply reduction: reducing the illicit supply of drugs, control of precursors and of amphetamine-type stimulants, and international cooperation on eradicating the illicit cultivation of crops used for the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and on alternative development;

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(c) International cooperation: countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation.

B. General debate of the high-level segment: progress achieved and challenges in implementing the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem

4. At the 1st meeting of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which was also the 1st meeting of the high-level segment, on 13 March, the following persons made statements:

Khaled Abdelrahman Shamaa, Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations (Vienna) and Chair of the Commission

Ceremonial opening

Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden

Nora Volkow, Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse of the United States of America

Michel Kazatchkine, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Representatives of the Youth Forum

Formal opening

Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna

Raymond Yans, President of the International Narcotics Control Board

Aliyar Lebbe Abdul Azeez, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations (Vienna) (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China)

Ali El Mhamdi, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations (Vienna) (on behalf of the Group of African States)

Surood R. Najib, Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations (Vienna) (on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States)

Hernán Estrada Román, Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations (Vienna) (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States)

Zoi Makri, Deputy Minister of Health of Greece (on behalf of the European Union)

Carlos Romero, Minister of Government, Plurinational State of Bolivia

Vytenis Povilas Andriukaitis, Minister of Health of Lithuania

Vitore Andre Zilio Maximiano, National Secretary on Drug Policies of Brazil

Alex White, Minister of State for Primary Care of Ireland

Peter Dunne, Minister of Internal Affairs, Associate Minister of Health and Associate Minister of Conservation of New Zealand

Alfonso Gómez Méndez, Minister of Justice and Law of Colombia

Alois Stöger, Minister of Health of Austria

Djoko Suyanto, Coordinating Minister for Legal, Political and Security Affairs of Indonesia

Norman Baker, Minister of State for Crime Prevention, Home Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Kembo Mohadi, Minister of Home Affairs of Zimbabwe

5. At the 2nd meeting of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission, on 13 March, the following persons made statements:

Abdelwahid Yousif Ibrahim Mokhtar, Minister of Interior of the Sudan

Sredoje Nović, Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Head of the Commission for the Prevention of Drug Abuse of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Alexander Zmeyevsky, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for international cooperation in combating terrorism and transnational organized crime

Mariana Benítez Tiburcio, Deputy Attorney General for Legal and International Affairs of Mexico

Mama Fouda Andre, Minister of Public Health of Cameroon

Jérôme Bougouma, Minister of Territorial Administration, Security and Decentralisation of Burkina Faso

William R. Brownfield, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Department of State of the United States of America

Anatoliy Vyborov, Chair, Committee on Combating Narcotic Business and Drug Trafficking Control, Ministry of Interior Affairs of Kazakhstan

Mobarez Rashidi, Minister of Counter Narcotics of Afghanistan

Maria Larsson, Minister for Children and the Elderly, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs of Sweden

Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, Minister of Interior and Secretary-General of the Drug Control Headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Carlos Raúl Morales Moscoso, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala

Andrea Arz de Falco, Vice Director of the Federal Office of Public Health, Federal Department of Home Affairs of Switzerland

Kou Chansina, Chairman of the National Committee for Drugs Control and Supervision of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Rodrigo Vélez, Executive Director, National Council for the Control of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances of Ecuador

Alymbai Sultanov, Chairman of the State Service on Drug Control under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic

Jose Marlowe S. Pedregosa, Executive Director, Dangerous Drugs Board of the Philippines

Mamadou Gnénéma Coulibaly, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Public Freedoms of Côte d'Ivoire

Montaser Ahmed Omar Abouzeid, Anti-Narcotics General Administration of Egypt

Ahmed Alzahrani, Director General of General Directorate of Narcotics Control of Saudi Arabia

Le Quy Vuong, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Public Security of Viet Nam

Danièle Jourdain-Menninger, President of the Interministerial Mission Against Drug Abuse of France

Juan Carlos Molina, Director of the Secretariat of Planning for the Prevention of Drug Addiction and Drug Trafficking of Argentina

Francisco de Asís Babín Vich, Government delegate for the National Plan on Drugs, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality of Spain

Diego Cánepa, Vice-Secretary of the Office of the President of Uruguay

Manuel Ferreira Teixeira, Secretary of State for Health of Portugal

Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs of Malaysia

Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa

6. At the 3rd meeting of the session, on 14 March, the following persons made statements:

Piotr Jablonski, Director of the National Bureau for Drug Prevention of Poland

Astrid Nokleberg Heiberg, State Secretary, Ministry of Health and Care Services of Norway

James Agalga, Deputy Minister of Interior of Ghana

Horacio Nogués Zubizarreta, Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations (Vienna)

Filippo Formica, Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations (Vienna)

Chaikasem Nitisiri, Minister of Justice of Thailand

Volodymyr Tymoshenko, Head of the State Service on Drugs Control of Ukraine

Sumit Bose, Finance Secretary of India

Khaled Mutahar Al-Radhi, Director-General of the Drug Control Department, Ministry of Interior of Yemen

Masagos Zulkifli, Senior Minister of State of Singapore

Jindrich Voboril, National Drug Coordinator, Head of the Secretariat and Executive Vice-Chair of the Government Council for Drug Policy Coordination of the Czech Republic

Mario Antonio Rivera Mora, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations (Vienna)

Maria Isabel Fernandes Tormenta dos Santos, State Secretary for Justice, Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of Angola

Hussam Al Husseini, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations (Vienna)

John Sandy, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations (Geneva)

Julio Garro Gálvez, Director General for Multilateral and Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru

Ahmadu Giade, Chairman and Chief Executive, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency of Nigeria

Vilayat Eyvazov, Deputy-Minister of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan

Marlene Mortler, Federal Government Drug Commissioner of Germany

Valentin Mikhnevich, First Deputy Interior Minister of Belarus

Yair Geller, Director of the Anti-Drug Authority of Israel

Georgi Dimitrov, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria

Lars Petersen, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Health of Denmark

Ana Teresa Dengo Benavides, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations (Vienna)

Catalin Negoi Nita, Head of the International Department of the Anti-Drug Agency of Romania

Blanka Jamnišek, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the United Nations (Vienna)

Nathan Smyth, First Assistant Secretary, Population Health Division, Department of Health of Australia

7. At the 4th meeting of the session, on 14 March, the following persons made statements:

Mohammed Bin Saif Al Hosni, Under Secretary for Health Affairs, Ministry of Health of Oman

Peter Van Wulfften Palthe, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations (Vienna)

Liu Yuejin, Permanent Deputy Secretary, National Narcotics Control Commission of China

Muhammad Akbar Khan Hoti, Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control of Pakistan

Emine Birgur Fertekligil, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations (Vienna)

Georg Sparber, Alternate Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations (Vienna)

Mohamed Samir Koubaa, Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations (Vienna)

Masatoshi Narita, Counsellor for Pharmaceutical Safety, Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan

Sadiq Marafi, Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations (Vienna)

Rustam Nazarov, Head of the Anti-Narcotic Agency of Tajikistan

Yousef Ozreil, General Director of the National Programme for Drug Control and Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice of the State of Palestine

Ashot Hovakimian, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia

Mark Bailey, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations (Vienna)

T. J. Seokolo, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations (Vienna)

Mohamed Benhocine, Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations (Vienna)

Alí Uzcategui Duque, Permanent Representative of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations (Vienna)

Ali El Mhamdi, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations (Vienna)

Juan Carlos Marsán Aguilera, Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations (Vienna)

Elina Kotovirta, Ministerial Adviser of Finland

Dowletgeldi Mamovov, Deputy Chairman of the State Service for Security Protection of Health Society of Turkmenistan

Morie Lengor, Assistant Inspector General of Police of Sierra Leone

Khalid Hameed Al Jjuboory, Minister Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Iraq

Ramón Quiñones, Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations (Vienna)

Marcus Day, Director of the Caribbean Drug and Alcohol Research Institute and the Technical Adviser for Drugs and HIV to the CARICOM Secretariat, Saint Lucia

Zeljko Petkovic, Head of the Office for Combatting Narcotic Drugs Abuse of Croatia

Ibrahim A. Albesbas, Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations (Vienna)

Simon Madjumo Maruta, Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations (Vienna)

Hellmut Lagos Koller, Acting Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations (Vienna)

Alison Crocket on behalf of Michel Sidibe, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and also on behalf of Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Shekhar Saxena, Director, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, on behalf of Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization

Alexey Lyzhenkov, Coordinator of Activities to Address Transnational Threats, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Paul Simons, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, on behalf of José Miguel Insulza, Secretary-General of the Organization of American States

Patrick Penninckx Executive Secretary, Cooperation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking (Pompidou Group) of the Council of Europe

Shamil Aleskerov, Secretary-General of the Economic Cooperation Organization

Michel Perron, Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, on behalf of the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs

C. Round-table discussions of the high-level segment

8. Round-table discussions were held on 13 and 14 March 2014 on the following themes:

(a) Demand reduction: reducing drug abuse and dependence through a comprehensive approach;

(b) Supply reduction: reducing the illicit supply of drugs, control of precursors and of amphetamine-type stimulants, and international cooperation on eradicating the illicit cultivation of crops used for the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and on alternative development;

(c) International cooperation: countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation.

9. On 13 March, the outcome of the round table on demand reduction was presented by the Chair of that round table, Francisco de Asís Babín Vich (Spain). The outcome is reproduced below.

Outcome of the round table on demand reduction: reducing drug abuse and dependence through a comprehensive approach

The importance of demand reduction based on scientific evidence in the context of a health-centred approach to the drug problem was universally emphasized, and it was underlined that, in the drug control conventions, health was considered critical to

achieving healthier and safer societies. Drug control policies based exclusively on counteracting production and trafficking were not sustainable.

Although not all countries would be implementing all of them, a range of interventions and policies were part of a comprehensive and balanced approach. Such interventions and policies concerned drug prevention, globally and with special emphasis on particularly vulnerable groups such as children, youth and women; drug treatment, both pharmacological and psychosocial; the treatment of co-morbidities; and social protection.

Some speakers referred to the scientific evidence pointing to the fact that the incidence of HIV was reduced in communities that implemented harm reduction services and requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to provide the technical assistance necessary to implement and scale up those services.

Many participants reported good results in their countries with regard to reducing the prevalence of the consumption of specific substances and/or the consequences of drug use, particularly HIV. The increase in the use of new psychoactive substances was a challenge in many countries, although there had been some early successes in developing a response.

Drug use and drug dependence were seen as health issues and, in many countries, providing people who used drugs and/or suffered from drug dependence with treatment and support rather than imposing criminal sanctions or punishment had been found to be helpful. At the same time, concern was expressed with regard to countries moving towards legalizing the use of cannabis, as that would have an impact on the incidence and prevalence of cannabis use, particularly among young people.

The importance of focusing on early interventions was underlined. Prevention should start early and many countries were strengthening their capacity with regard to screening and early intervention.

The capacity of practitioners addressing the issue of drugs was also being strengthened, but concern was expressed at the fact that such capacity-building was still not adequate. Interventions needed to be carried out by qualified and well-trained professionals, and must be based on scientific evidence.

Speakers expressed the need to support capacity-building in respect of the full spectrum of interventions and policies, as well as data collection. The standards developed by UNODC on those issues were seen as crucial reference points that needed to be adapted, adopted and disseminated widely.

The need for the systematic and sustainable involvement of all concerned was emphasized repeatedly: governments, municipalities and civil society organizations could contribute to the development and implementation of policies and the delivery of interventions.

10. On 13 March, the outcome of the round table on supply reduction was presented by the Chair of that round table, Kittipong Kittayarak (Thailand). The outcome is reproduced below.

Outcome of the round table on supply reduction: reducing the illicit supply of drugs, control of precursors and of amphetamine-type stimulants, and international cooperation on eradicating the illicit cultivation of crops used for the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and on alternative development

Participants expressed concern about the increasing levels of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and noted that illicit cultivation had worsened since 2009.

Speakers noted the need for better information on the number of drug users in various regions in order to tackle the illicit drug problem effectively, highlighted the importance of international cooperation to tackle cross-border trafficking, citing as an example the increasing rates of maritime trafficking using shipping containers, and noted the need for increased sharing of information and intelligence between authorities on all matters relating to the investigation and prosecution of drug trafficking.

Participants spoke of the need to maintain effective control over the precursor chemicals in Tables I and II of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, because organized criminal groups were diverting "pre-precursors" and non-scheduled substances not under international control to produce new psychoactive substances and other amphetamine-type substances.

Speakers referred to the increasing challenge posed by the growth in methamphetamine abuse, and expressed their concern over the encroachment being made by new psychoactive substances in illicit drug markets.

Participants reiterated the importance of precursor control and suggested that stricter controls should be introduced to intercept the smuggling of precursors into illicit drug-production areas.

Participants highlighted the successful reduction in the production of opium in the South-East Asian region and in the production and trafficking of cocaine from the Andean region, which had been achieved through both alternative development and law enforcement efforts to dismantle organized criminal groups. Participants also noted that the sharing of best practices and experience was needed.

Participants noted that alternative development must be based on the principle of shared responsibility, taking a balanced and comprehensive approach, supported by strong international cooperation, the sharing of best practices and lessons learned and the involvement of stakeholders.

Speakers highlighted the importance of addressing the driving factors that led marginalized communities to engage in illicit crop cultivation and noted that only a fraction of communities currently benefited from alternative development interventions.

A number of speakers stressed the role of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development and welcomed efforts being made to put those principles into practice.

Participants recognized the importance of capacity-building and the need for alternative development strategies to be designed in conjunction with stakeholders,

including civil society, stressing the need to work with the private sector in order to facilitate access to markets.

Speakers reiterated that alternative development was a long-term, high-investment action, which, if properly implemented, resulted in improved sustainable livelihoods and a decrease in illicit crop cultivation.

Speakers highlighted that a successful international supply reduction strategy involved alternative development, crop eradication, law enforcement and interdiction.

11. On 14 March, the outcome of the round table on international cooperation was presented by Dubravka Simonovic (Croatia). The outcome is reproduced below.

Outcome of the round table on international cooperation: countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation

Speakers expressed concern about the scale of illicit financial flows originating from drug trafficking and noted that the proceeds of crime could flow through the banking system or formal and informal money or value transfer systems, or be transported by cross-border cash couriers.

Participants highlighted that the disruption of financial flows originating from illicit activities was a major component in combating transnational organized crime.

Speakers noted the importance of a global anti-money-laundering system based on the United Nations drug control conventions, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force, in combating illicit financial flows. The key elements of such a system included a national legal framework to combat money-laundering, the establishment and strengthening of national authorities such as financial intelligence units, dedicated law enforcement and anti-corruption agencies, the application of special investigative techniques, a trained judiciary and the establishment of multilateral cooperation mechanisms.

Many speakers emphasized the close connections between drug trafficking, corruption and money-laundering. In addition to the potential of corruption to undermine efforts to combat money-laundering, other challenges included insufficient resources, lack of expertise on combating money-laundering and confiscating assets, the increasing misuse of offshore financial centres and obstacles to international legal cooperation.

Participants highlighted the importance of international judicial cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking and pointed out the particular value of such cooperation at the regional level, where countries shared common concerns and challenges.

Speakers reported progress in both concluding bilateral treaties on international judicial cooperation and amending domestic legal frameworks in the light of the relevant United Nations conventions.

The work carried out by UNODC to establish regional networks that facilitated cooperation in practice and offered platforms for capacity-building, such as the

Network of West African Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime, was acknowledged by participants.

Speakers drew attention to the need for a flexible and timely approach in the provision of international judicial cooperation, based on the principle of common responsibility among States. Participants highlighted, in particular, the need for effective cooperation related to non-coercive measures and the identification and confiscation of criminal assets.

Speakers referred to the challenges that still remained with regard to international judicial cooperation, notably in respect of the establishment of competent national authorities and their role as points of contact, the development of guidelines for successful requests, the establishment of mechanisms for the enforcement of requests for restraint and confiscation of criminal assets, the application of the dual-criminality requirement and the non-extradition of nationals

D. Adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem

12. On 14 March 2014, the ministers and government representatives participating in the high-level segment of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs adopted the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to counter the World Drug Problem. (For the text of the Statement, see chapter x, section x.) Following the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement, statements were made by the representatives of Greece, Switzerland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ecuador and Thailand.

13. The representative of Greece made a statement on the issue of the death penalty, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, as well as the following countries: Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Haiti, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Namibia, New Zealand, Panama, Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay and Uzbekistan. The representative stated that those on whose behalf he spoke deeply regretted that the Joint Ministerial Statement did not include language on the death penalty, that they had a strong and unequivocal opposition to the death penalty, in all circumstances, and that they considered that the death penalty undermined human dignity and that errors in its application were irreversible. Moreover, imposing the death penalty for drug offences was against the norms of international law, specifically article 6, paragraph 2, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The representative underlined the importance of the full implementation of the General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty that was adopted in December 2012 with an unprecedented number of votes, in which, in the interim, the Assembly called for international

minimum standards on its use to be respected. The representative welcomed the recent decision by the International Narcotics Control Board to call on countries still applying the death penalty to consider its abolition for drug-related offences. The representative urged all States Members of the United Nations to respect the international minimum standards on the use of death penalty and to impose a moratorium on the use of the death penalty as a step towards its final abolition.

14. The representative of Switzerland expressed support for the statement made by Greece on behalf of the European Union and, speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein and Norway, stated that the fight against the death penalty was an integral part of their human rights policies and that they opposed the death penalty in all circumstances, including for drug-related offences. In that regard, the representative recalled that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights limited the use of the death penalty to the "most serious crimes", which was meant to ensure that the death penalty, where still applied, was an exceptional measure, and also recalled calls and statements regarding the restriction of the application of the death penalty made by the General Assembly, the Human Rights Committee, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Executive Director of UNODC and INCB. The representative stated that the silence of the Joint Ministerial Statement on the death penalty was indeed regrettable and that the Statement therefore did not reflect their concern about the death penalty or take into account the position expressed on the subject by other entities within the United Nations system. The representative further stated that they would nevertheless continue to advocate the abolition of the death penalty, including for drug-related offences. The representative requested that the report of the Session reflect that their agreement to the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement was given on the understanding that capital punishment was not compatible with their commitment to ensuring that the drug problem was addressed with full respect for all human rights and the inherent dignity of all individuals. International cooperation in drug law enforcement was contingent on full respect by all parties involved for all human rights, including such a fundamental human right as the right to life.

15. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, speaking also on behalf of Bahrain, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Yemen, stated that the issue of the death penalty was not in the mandate of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The representative put on record the position of those delegations concerning the issue of death penalty and reiterated that there was no international consensus on the abolition of the death penalty; that the death penalty was not prohibited under international law, including the three drug control conventions; and that the application of the death penalty was a criminal justice matter to be decided by the competent authorities of individual States. Every State had the sovereign right to decide on its own justice system, taking into account its own circumstances, and every State had the sovereign right to choose its own political, economic, social and legal systems, based on what was in its own best interests. The representative reiterated that the death penalty was an important component of the system of the administration of law and justice and that it was imposed only for the most serious crimes, including drug trafficking, and that it served as a deterrent. The representative noted that they had proper legal safeguards in place that took into account national policies that prevented any miscarriage of justice.

16. In his national capacity, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran put on record the reservation of his delegation regarding paragraph 44 of the Joint Ministerial Statement and stated that, from the beginning of the consultations on the Statement, his delegation, believing in the need to promote the cause of combating narcotic drugs, had committed itself to working constructively and with the greatest flexibility in order to facilitate the emergence of a consensus among participating delegations. The representative stated a strong reservation about the reference to the Financial Action Task Force in the Statement, as it was an exclusive, non-transparent Task Force that had been directed and guided by political and biased motives. For his delegation, and for other delegations, any reference to the Task Force should not be interpreted as giving any recognition or legitimacy to it. The representative stated that his Government continued to be at the front line of the international fight against drug trafficking and terrorism and had spared no efforts to eradicate those menaces.

17. The representative of Ecuador stated that her delegation had joined the consensus on the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement, which summarized achievements and challenges that remained to be addressed. However, in that Statement, there were specific references to the effect that drug problems should be addressed only in the framework of the three international drug control conventions. In that respect, the representative reiterated her delegation's position that the drug policy implemented under the auspices of the United Nations needed to be revised, as it had been created without considering the historical and cultural particularities of the different regions of the world, which had led to the implementation of a model with high costs, especially in terms of human rights. That approach was now outdated, especially in some countries in Latin America. The representative stated that her delegation's reservations were based on its position that the world drug problem should not be addressed only within the framework of those conventions and that the revision of those international instruments had become indispensable, as they had been overtaken by existing reality.

18. The representative of Thailand expressed the hope that the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement would mark an important milestone in the common endeavour and shared responsibility of fighting the global scourge of the drug problem.

E. Closure of the high-level segment

19. Closing statements were made by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and by the Chair of the high-level segment of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission.